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THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION. By Irving King, Ph.D. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1910. Pp. xxiii, 371.

This book is the product of an earnest endeavor to apply the general concepts of functional psychology to the problems of the origin and development and interpretation of religion. It is, in a sense, a continuation of the author's earlier work, "The Differentiation of the Religious Consciousness," and it is characterized, as was its predecessor, by broad and conscientious scholarship, scientific method, and an open and tolerant spirit. Unfortunately, again like its predecessor, it is not marked by skill in presentation and arrangement nor by clearness of exposition. The incautious reader is constantly getting lost in the mass of illustrations and cannot see the forest for the trees; and though the thesis of the book is continually reiterated, it is usually in such abstract and indefinite terms that one might be excused if at the end he were unable to say exactly what it was the author meant to prove. Repetitions of constantly increasing indefiniteness do not help matters. If the book had been half as long, it might have been twice as clear.

In general it may be said that the book consists of three theses and a description. The first thesis concerns the nature, problems, and methods of the psychology of religion; the second and third have to do with the nature of religion and its origin; while the rest of the book,—the larger and better portion,—is given up to a description of the development of religion and a discussion of various incidental and related subjects.

Dr. King means by religion not any particular belief, but an attitude of appreciation toward one's universe (which, of course, may be very small), in so far as this universe is related to one's life and to the meaning of life. "The religious consciousness is an attitude built up about the larger meaning of experience which we *feel*, but cannot *state*, except in relatively vague symbolic forms. . . . It represents the attempt of some minds to grapple with this larger reality or meaning of life, to give it a symbolism that may render it more definitely available or capable of playing some explicit part in our social interactions" (p. 340).

Yet though religion is not a *belief*, it often gets itself expressed in terms of belief; and every religious belief is therefore a more or less symbolic expression of the religious attitude.

This, as I understand it, is Dr. King's position; but it is far from clearly expressed. He tries to make his view plainer by constant use of the term *value*, in order, apparently, to differentiate religion from mere belief. Thus, "the religious attitude may be said to be the consciousness of the value of action in terms of its ultimate organization" (p. 85). In fact, the whole book is largely a discussion of religious 'values.' This way of putting things may at times have been a help to the author in his thinking; but it is questionable whether the reader will find it anything but a hindrance. The reason for this is perhaps merely the author's unfortunate mode of expression; but it also seems in part due to his not having a perfectly clear notion himself of what he means by the term. A long discussion is given up to the nature and origin of the consciousness of value: it arises, we are told, from impeded action; delay in gaining one's end is necessary to it; and the various methods and activities involved in gaining the end thus come to be valued on their own account. In this long section the term *value* is used in its ordinary sense. The reader, therefore, feels rather disconcerted to find the word thereafter used synonymously with *belief* or *concept*, or even identified with material things. Thus on page 32 we are told that the "values" of religion "may range from the secret names and the sacred bull-roarers of the Australians to the conception of a divine organization of the universe." Likewise, from page 77, we learn that in a certain tribe "the most complex and remote value of all" is "a theory regarding the origin of the tribe," *etc.* Similar uses of the word are to be found everywhere throughout the book, so that it is frequently difficult to make out exactly what the author is writing about; and the conclusion seems to be that theories of the universe, secret names, and bull-roarers originate, like *other* values, from impeded action.

The origin of the religious attitude is to be sought, according to our author, not in any 'inherent tendency' or 'innate sense' of man, but in the various social situations, with their correlative needs, in which primitive men found themselves. To explain religion as an 'instinct,' or to say that man is 'incurably religious,' or that he is endowed with an innate "perception of the infinite," is to give no explanation at all. Even if one should grant the existence of a religious instinct, this itself would require explanation, for instincts are not original,

but arise from, and are to be explained by perfectly definite situations. Religion (like instinct) is always a response to a situation. The really instructive question is, therefore, What are the concrete situations out of which the religious attitude has developed? Dr. King's thesis in response to this is best expressed in his preface: "The religious attitude has been built up through the overt activities which appear in primitive social groups, activities which were either spontaneous or playful, or which appeared with reference to meeting various needs of the life process; and the development of emotional values has been mediated through the fact that these activities were in the main social" (p. viii).

One other factor, however, as King points out, is of considerable influence in building up religion in anything like its complete form: namely, the belief that many things possess, (or are possessed by), a 'mysterious power' ('manitou,' 'wakonda,' 'orenda,' 'mana'), as it is variously named. This power is entirely impersonal, and the belief in it is merely the correlative to the savage's feeling that here and there he must "watch out." This belief is not religion, but it contributes its share in the origin and development of religion. Given this feeling or belief as a background, the various practical and playful habitual activities of the social group will develop into a religious cult, and the religious attitude of mind will thus result. It is one of the weak points in Dr. King's book that he fails (in spite of many laborious pages) to show us just why and how the religious attitude of mind should result. That various social activities which have a purely practical or playful origin, in time become religious,—*i. e.*, come to be regarded as religious,—he makes beautifully clear. And this is an important thing. But it throws but little light on the origin of religion. For it presupposes that the tribesmen already knew what they meant by *religious*, and that they had a religion. In short, it cannot be said that Dr. King has contributed much toward the (chiefly speculative) question of the origin of religion. For if religion is not a particular belief or emotion, but a very general "attitude built up about the larger meaning of experience," it is not to be explained by any particular type of situation, whether individual or social, but only by life itself and the whole nature of man. Which seems to bring us round again to the rejected view that man is 'incurably religious.'

Dr. King is much more successful in his treatment of the development of particular religious practices, attitudes, and beliefs from particular social organizations and situations,—and this, in fact, is the most important part of his book. He has shown clearly and with great wealth of illustration how the kind of religion which a primitive people has is always dependent upon its environment and its social structure. And in this connection his treatment of several incidental questions (notably that of the subconscious and its relation to religion) is especially to be commended.

In conclusion, a few words must be added concerning Dr. King's view of the psychology of religion.. In his opinion, no peculiarity of content is to be found in the religious consciousness. Hence it can be differentiated from other forms of experience only with reference to its function and end. To treat it scientifically, therefore, is to apply to it the concepts of functional psychology and see its position within the life process. Moreover, the presupposition of such a scientific treatment, according to our author, must be the thesis that religious states are of the same nature as other mental states and are governed by the same psychological laws. Otherwise it would be impossible to deal with them scientifically. Not only must the phenomena of religion be treated as entirely explicable by the facts and laws of psychology; no other kind of causation than the ordinary human sort can be entertained for a moment as a possible explanation. Both the older supernatural view and the more recent pseudo-psychological one (for which, *e. g.*, Professor James's "Varieties" stands) are equally unscientific. "If preternatural causation were possible through the subconscious region of the mind, there could be no psychology of religion" (p. 18). "Psychologically God is not perceived, nor can the divine mind be regarded as something in some way continuous with the experience of the psychologist through its subconscious phases" (p. 264).

There can be no doubt that Dr. King is right in insisting that the psychology of religion must seek a complete explanation of all religious phenomena in purely human psychology. The question, however, will still remain open to anyone who wishes to raise it, whether this search can be successful. Nor can I see that the counter hypothesis of causation through a divine mind would be any more destructive of the psychology of re-

ligion than the existence of the previously invisible Neptune proved to the science of astronomy. Dr. King is certainly incorrect in his assertion that the religious man "would hardly claim that his deity is a phenomenon" (p. 264). The God of the common religious man and of the pluralist philosopher (when he has one) is just that,—a phenomenal conscious being like the rest of us. And it might perfectly well transpire in the course of psychological investigation that certain facts,—say those of the mystic consciousness,—would be better explained on the hypothesis of such a (hitherto) unknown but communicating consciousness than on the supposition that we already have knowledge of all the relevant causes. It must be admitted, however, that while this is a possibility, it is one which the psychologist would hardly be justified in acting upon and using as a serious hypothesis until he has in vain exhausted all other modes of explanation.

The chief value of Dr. King's book lies in its emphasis upon the influence which social structure and custom have in determining the direction and detail of religious development. The careful study of primitive peoples,—with which nearly all this book is taken up and which is now becoming so generally popular,—certainly throws considerable light upon the higher phases of religion. Too much, however, must not be expected from this sort of thing. We must beware of seeking to explain the better known by the less known. And when all is said, the key to our own deeper religious problems must be sought here and now,—in the spiritual life of the cultured nations and individuals of the twentieth century, rather than in Australia or among the Semites of the year 1000 B. C.

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HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By T. Clark Murray, LL.D., F.R.S.C. London: T. and T. Clark, 1909. Pp. 328.

Opinions differ as to what the term Christian Ethics should stand for. Should it mean the teaching of Jesus? A view of life which would be an interpretation of the life of Jesus? The teaching of the early disciples or of the 'Christian Church?' Professor Murray's book is not a handbook of Ethics which is specifically Christian in any of the senses referred to. It is based